

What this is About:

Preface to this 2015 Redaction of the NCIS Report of Investigation of Boorda Suicide

Following the May 16, 1996 suicide of the then-Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral J. Michael (Mike) Boorda, an Investigation into his death was conducted by the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS). Their final Report was completed in September of 1996. A few insiders received a complete, unredacted copy at that time. With much material withheld, this Report was first released to the public on November 2, 1996, as noted in S-702(o), S-725(g), and S-726(m).¹ Over subsequent years the Navy has released to the public a succession of heavily redacted versions of that NCIS Report – in 2008 and 2015, for example.

One excellent article describing a multitude of pressures and problems troubling the Navy and its senior-most officer was “**Admiral Boorda’s War,**” by **Peter J. Boyer**, a lengthy and comprehensive presentation in the *New Yorker* of September 16, 1996.² Boyer’s focus was on a range of problems, many gender-based, and how they led to sharp criticism of Navy leadership by the Navy’s Old Guard. Rightly or wrongly, retired admirals and some others blamed Boorda.

Another excellent article was “**Breaking Point**” by **Nick Kotz**, published in *Washingtonian* magazine in December 1996. It was a detailed analysis of pressures impacting the Navy as well as its CNO. This marathon-length article (20,000 words) was written with the Navy’s blessing and considerable assistance. Kotz tracked the day by day highlights from much of the last month in Boorda’s life. As noted in the San Diego Union Tribune (S-726(n)), Kotz did not point to just one concern, but to a range of stresses. Kotz did not identify the medals issue as the sole cause of the suicide, but he did not discourage readers from seeing the medals controversy as the triggering event. I believe this is incorrect, and the medals issue was a relatively minor concern. I believe the medals story was Boorda’s misdirection ploy, comparable to his years-earlier Canadian Oiler tactic described in S-730(a), S-761(a) p.98, and S-733(o).

There remains in my mind a significant issue concerning the final nine pages of the NCIS Report’s eleven-page Exhibit 36. These are the handwritten portion of the NCIS Inventory of Admiral Boorda’s automobile, an inventory done by an NCIS agent on the afternoon of Admiral Boorda’s suicide. (These handwritten notes were presumably by Boorda himself.) **If anyone has an early version of these eleven pages (Exhibit 36: Boorda’s vehicle inventory i.e., pages 168 through 178, based on the handwritten pagination),** excerpted from an early version of the NCIS Report of Investigation of Boorda’s Suicide (i.e., a version issued by the Navy at any time between 1996 and 2010³) **I would be most grateful to get a copy.** (If it is buried among your old papers I might be able to pay you for the time you spend digging it out). **See also #2 on homepage**

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¹ These abbreviations refer to the Bibliography of publications related to Boorda *et al* in this web site.

² Boyer’s article is S-760(a) in the Bibliography. “Breaking Point” by Nick Kotz, is S-761(b) in the Bibliography.

³ Copies of this NCIS Report were paginated in handwriting from initial issuance of the Report (in September 1996) through the 2008 Redaction, and 2 or 3 years later. More recent redaction(s), for example the 2015 Redaction has “typed” (i.e., machine applied) pagination. **What is requested here is Exhibit 36 as it existed in the early years: the version that begins with (handwritten pagination starting on) p 168 and goes thru (handwritten) p 178.**

NCIS has given me their answer (all 2+9= 11 pages of Exhibit 36), in response to my FOIA request, but it appears there might have been a mixup. What I’m looking for is the handwritten pages of Exhibit 36 (11 pp) as seen in the initially distributed NCIS Report of Investigation of Boorda’s Suicide.